



Hwa Rang Do® and Korean history

The evolution of Korean combat skills began about 5000 years ago with the establishment of the Kochoson kingdom. During the subsequent Three Kingdoms Period, this Korean warrior tradition found a particular expression in the combat skills of the Hwarang warrior system of the ancient kingdom of Silla. Their secret combat skills are codified into Hwa Rang Do huge syllabus.

GM Taejoon Lee

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Grandmaster Taejoon Lee (Hwa Rang Do 8° dan), the eldest son and the apparent heir to Hwa Rang Do, tells us what follows about the relationship between Hwa Rang Do and Korean history, moreover he describes to us the incredible job made by His Father Dr. Joo Bang Lee (Hwa Rang Do 10° Dan):

You Tube



Marco Mattiucci

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***A legacy of Loyalty, Relentlessly seeking Truth,
Empowering Lives, Serving Humanity***

“There is always much discussion within the martial arts community concerning the validity of various claims made by martial arts grandmasters and founders, regardless of their styles or national origins. I do not like to address these issues because I believe that truth should be discovered through personal experience — through research, travel and human interaction — rather than from rumors, gossip and hearsay. Anyway, I have come to understand that my life — my truth — is intertwined with the fiber of Hwa Rang Do, and that this Art is a crucial thread in the tapestry of Korean martial history.

It is important to understand that the modern Korean martial arts were founded immediately following Korea’s freedom from Japanese occupation (1910-1945) and the Korean War (1950-1953), which marked Korea’s entrance into the modern industrial age and the birth of what is now South Korea.



The entire nation was rebuilding its war-torn cities from the ashes and becoming one of the top international economic powers. Korea was frantically trying to rediscover its identity, and the streets were filled with opportunists taking advantage of the country’s regained freedom and renewed nationalism. Just as American cities in the 1920s are often depicted with scenes of mobsters and bootleggers, bands of gangsters roamed urban Korea in the middle part of the century. The common people were forced to rally against them, defending themselves with their bare hands or whatever everyday implements could be used as weapons. Even today, it is illegal for the public to possess firearms in Korea.

It is owing to this dangerous era that martial arts became a necessity for the common people who chose not to be affiliated with gangs. My Father, Dr. Joo Bang Lee, not only developed the most successful chain of martial Art schools in Seoul, South Korea, but also protected the public from unruly street thugs. He quickly gained notoriety and respect from the common people and was given the nickname ‘the man who came down from the mountain’.

It was in this climate, before Tae Kwon Do became Korea’s national sport, that my Father created a vast chain of Hwa Rang Do schools based in Seoul. To be the founder of such a martial art, to establish such a successful chain of schools in Seoul, and to accomplish these things in the pressure-filled social, political and economic environment of that period speaks volumes about the man my Father was and is.

I am blessed as a student and a son because my mentor and my Father are the same person. Many people know him as a man, a teacher and a martial artist, but only I have known him as a god (when I was young), a Father (always) and a mentor (when I became a man). No one is perfect, but of all the great leaders I have had the pleasure and honor of meeting, no one has worked harder than my Father. I am constantly searching for mentors, but I have yet to meet one who can inspire me like he has.”

Many other details of the discussion in the book: “Hwa Rang Do®: Defend, Take Down & Submit” by Taejoon Lee & M. Cheng ©2005 Black Belt Communications LLC (ISBN-13: 978-0-89750-281-8).

About the author: Hwa Rang Do® Head Instructor, Lieutenant Colonel of the Italian Military Police Force (Carabinieri) and Engineer Marco Mattiucci is the Chief of the Italian Branch of the World Hwa Rang Do® Association and one of the main followers of Grandmaster Taejoon Lee.

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